

Message Text

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 01 HELSIN 02060 181701Z

50

ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 EURE-00 EB-07 SAJ-01 CIAE-00 DODE-00

PM-04 H-02 INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01

SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06 /067 W
----- 023495

P R 181448Z SEP 75

FM AMEMBASSY HELSINKI

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 9160

INFO AMEMBASSY COPENHAGEN

AMEMBASSY OSLO

AMEMBASSY STOCKHOLM

AMEMBASSY REYKJAVIK

AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

C O N F I D E N T I A L HELSINKI 2060

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINT, FI

SUBJECT: PARLIAMENTARY ELECTION PREDICTION

REF: HELSINKI A-157

1. THE CAMPAIGN FOR THE SEPTEMBER 21-22 PARLIAMENTARY ELECTION IS COMING TO AN END TODAY WITH AN ALL-PARTY TV DEBATE. IT HAS BEEN A SHORT CAMPAIGN, REALLY ONLY STARTING ON AUGUST 18 WITH THE RETURN TO SCHOOL AND END OF SUMMER VACATIONS. WERE IT NOT FOR THE MORE THAN USUAL VITRIOLIC NATURE OF THE DEBATE -- ABOUT NON-ISSUES-- THE CAMPAIGN MIGHT HAVE PASSED BY ALMOST UNNOTICED. EXCEPT FOR HALF AN HOUR FOR EACH PARTY, TV HAS GIVEN THE COMPETING PARTIES EQUAL TREATMENT BY COMPLETELY IGNORING THE CAMPAIGN, AND MOST NEWSPAPERS HAVE RELEGATED IT TO THE BACK PAGES.

2. NONE OF THE PARTIES HAVE HAD ABILITY OR GUTS TO ADDRESS THEMSELVES TO REAL DOMESTIC PROBLEMS OF FINLAND--INFLATION, BALANCE OF PAYMENTS DEFICIT,
CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 02 HELSIN 02060 181701Z

AND EXPECTED INCREASED UNEMPLOYMENT. INSTEAD,

SECONDARY QUESTIONS OR NON-ISSUES SUCH AS WHAT TO DO WITH EXCESS HIGH COST HOUSING, PENSIONS EQUAL TO THE MINIMUM WAGE, AND PAYING MOTHERS FOR TAKING CARE OF THEIR CHILDREN AT HOME AS AGAINST ESTABLISHING MORE DAY-CARE CENTERS, HAVE BEEN HOTLY DEBATED. MUCH OF ORATORY HAS CONSISTED OF UNUSUALLY VITRIOLIC ATTACKS BY FORMER COALITION PARTNERS ON EACH OTHER -- TRYING TO PLACE THE BLAME FOR PRESENT ECONOMIC DIFFCULTIES ON ONE'S PARTNERS, AND A GENERAL SCARE CAMPAIGN ABOUT "SOCIALIZATION" DIRECTED AGAINST THE SOCIAL DEMOCRATS. MUCH OF CAMPAIGN ENERGY HAS ALSO BEEN EXPENDED ON TRYING TO FORCE OTHERS TO REVEAL THEIR INTENTIONS AS TO FUTURE BED-FELLOWS; I.E., WHICH PARTY WOULD EACH PARTY FIND ACCEPTABLE AS A GOVERNMENT PARTNER.

3. THE OVERSEAS VOTERS, MOSTLY IN SWEDEN, WHO FOR THE FIRST TIME HAD THE CHANCE TO CAST THEIR BALLOT, EXERCISED THEIR RIGHT TO A MUCH SMALLER EXTENT THAN EXPECTED. ONLY 27,000, OR ABOUT 25PERCENT OF THOSE ELIGIBLE, ACTUALLY VOTED. THE LOW TURN-OUT IS CONSIDERED TO BENEFIT THE NON-SOCIALISTS MORE THAN THE SOCIALISTS.

4. THE ABSENTEE VOTING, WHCIH JUST CONCLUDED, REACHED RECORD NUMBERS -- TOTALING 214,000. IT WAS ESPECIALLY HEAVY IN UNIVERSITY TOWNS, WHICH WOULD INDICATE A HIGH RATE AMONG STUDENTS. THIS IS CONSIDERED TO BENEFIT MOST THE TWO LARGE PARTIES ON THE LEFT AND RIGHT EXTREMES.

5. DESPITE THE FACT THAT THIS IS THE THIRD PARLIAMENTARY ELECTION IN FIVE YEARS, AND THE SECOND EARLY ELECTION IN A ROW, TOTAL VOTER TURN-OUT IS EXPECTED TO BE SLIGHTLY MORE THAN 80PER CENT, OR ABOUT THE SAME AS IN RECENT ELECTIONS.

6. THERE HAVE BEEN SEVERAL RECENT POLLS. THEY DO NOT SIGNAL ANY DRASTIC LATE MINUTE CHANGES, BUT DO INDICATE GROWING SUPPORT FOR THE FOUR BIG PARTIES. THIS MEANS THAT THE SOCIAL DEMOCRATS HAVE BEEN ABLE TO RECOUP SOME THE POPULAR SUPPORT THAT THEY HAD LOST.

CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 03 HELSIN 02060 181701Z

NUMBERS OF VOTES DO NOT TRANSLATE DIRECTLY INTO SEATS IN FINLAND, HOWEVER, DUE TO THE COMPLICATED PROPORTIONAL REPRESENTATION SYSTEM WHICH IS A COMBINATION OF A PARTY'S TOTAL VOTE IN A DISTRICT AND THE PERSONAL PREFERENCE EXPRESSED FOR INDIVIDUAL CANDIDATES. THE ELECTION ALLLIANCES BETWEEN VARIOUS PARTIES FURTHER DISTORT PREDICTIONS. THERE ARE MORE ALLIANCES THIS TIME THAN DURING RECENT ELECTIONS,

AND SOME SMALL PARTY CANDIDATES MAY SURVIVE BECAUSE OF THEM. THE POLLS ARE ALSO LESS THAN COMPLETELY ACCURATE IN THAT SUPPORT FOR SMALL PARTIES CAN BE GROSSLY MISCALCULATED THROUGH MINIMAL VARIATIONS IN THE SAMPLE GROUP. FINALLY, EVEN THE LATEST POLLS SHOWED THAT ABOUT 20 PERCENT OF THE ELECTORATE WAS STILL UNDECIDED OR MAY STAY HOME THIS TIME.

7. EVEN THOUGH THE PREVIOUSLY MENTIONED FACTORS TEND TO CLOUD EVERYONE'S CRYSTAL BALL, INCLUDING OURS, WE, ON THE BASIS OF CAREFUL ANALYSIS OF THE AVAILABLE DATA, DISCUSSIONS WITH REPRESENTATIVES OF POLITICAL PARTIES, AND SOME FIELD TRIPS, FEARLESSLY OFFER OUR OWN PREDICTION OF THE OUTCOME:

PARTY	PREDICTED SEATS	PLUS OR MINUS COMPARED WITH 1972-75 PARLIAMENT
SOCIAL DEMOCRATS (SDP)	54	.8, 7 2
COMMUNISTS (SKDL)	39	PLUS 2
TOTAL SOCIALIST:	93	
CENTER PARTY (KEPU)	42	PLUS 7
SWEDISH PEOPLE'S PARTY (SFP)	13	PLUS 4
LIBERAL PEOPLE'S PARTY (LKP)	8	PLUS 2
CHRISTIAN PARTY (SKL)	1	MINUS 3
CONSERVATIVE PARTY (KOK)	38	PLUS 5
RURAL PARTY (SMP)	3	MINUS 2
UNITY PARTY (SKYP)	1	MINUS 12
CONSTITUTIONALIST PARTY (SPK)	1	MINUS 1
TOTAL NON-SOCIALIST:	107	

COMMENT: IT IS POSSIBLE THAT THE SDP COULD LOSE AN ADDITIONAL SEAT OR TWO, WITH THE COMMUNISTS BEING CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 04 HELSIN 02060 181701Z

THE GAINERS, BUT THE SOCIALIST TOTAL WOULD REMAIN THE SAME. THE NON-SOCIALIST MAJORITY WILL THEREFORE REMAIN UNCHANGED, 107 VS. 93. THE CENTER PARTY WILL DISPLACE THE COMMUNISTS AS THE SECOND LARGEST PARTY. THE THREE CENTRIST PARTIES (CENTER, LIBERAL AND SWEDISH) WILL END UP WITH MORE SEATS THAN THE SOCIAL DEMOCRATS, AB. 63 VS. 54, AND THE CENTER PARTY MAY THEREFORE GET FIRST CRACK AT TRYING TO FORM THE NEW POST-ELECTION GOVERNMENT. IF THE THREE "HARD-LINE" PARTIES: SMP, CHRISTIANS, AND CONSTITUTIONALISTS DO NOT GET MORE THAN SIX SEATS -- AND THE SOCIALISTS NO MORE THAN 93, THE MORE-AND-MORE TALKED ABOUT ALTERNATIVE OF A STRAIGHT NON-SOCIALIST 101-SEAT MAJORITY GOVERNMENT, INCLUDING THE CONSERVATIVES, OR A CENTRIST MINORITY GOVERNMENT WITH TACIT CONSERVATIVE

SUPPORT, BECOMES VIABLE. MOST LIKELY COMBINATION
STILL REMAINS A REPEAT OF PREVIOUS SDP-CENTRIST
COALITION, THIS TIME WITH A CENTER PARTY PM. THE
NEGOTIATIONS FOR THE NEW GOVERNMENT WILL BE
TORTURED AND PROTRACTED. IT IS MORE AND MORE LIKELY
THAT SUCH A GOVERNMENT CANNOT BE FORMED UNTIL FEBRUARY-
MARCH 1976.
AUSTAD

CONFIDENTIAL

NNN

Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: ELECTION CAMPAIGNS, POLITICAL PARTIES, ELECTION FORECASTS, LEGISLATIVE ELECTIONS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 18 SEP 1975
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: WorrelSW
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1975HELSIN02060
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Film Number: D750324-0138
From: HELSINKI
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1975/newtext/t19750940/aaaabjmi.tel
Line Count: 177
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Office: ACTION EUR
Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 4
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: 75 HELSINKI A-157
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: WorrelSW
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 12 MAY 2003
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <12 MAY 2003 by ShawDG>; APPROVED <30 SEP 2003 by WorrelSW>
Review Markings:

Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
06 JUL 2006

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: PARLIAMENTARY ELECTION PREDICTION
TAGS: PINT, FI
To: STATE
Type: TE
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 06 JUL 2006